

# Cury School



## Attendance strategy

To be read in conjunction with the Special Partnership  
Trust Attendance Policy

2025-2026

<b>Approved by:</b>	Governors Headteacher	<b>Date:</b> January 2026
<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	January 2026	
<b>Next review due by:</b>	January 2027	

## Contents

1. Aims .....	2
2. Legislation and guidance .....	3
3. Roles and responsibilities .....	4
4. Recording attendance .....	6
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence .....	7
6. Strategies for promoting attendance .....	9
7. Attendance monitoring .....	10
8. Monitoring arrangements .....	12
9. Links with other policies .....	12
Appendix 1: Attendance codes .....	13
Appendix 2: Attendance data .....	16
Appendix 1: Leave of absence form .....	17

---

## 1. Aims

### **Our School**

At Cury School we are committed to and passionate about the learning and progress of our pupils. Staff and governors have high aspirations for our children and young people through a broad and varied curriculum; highly structured; differentiated and personalised learning programmes. We provide a specialist; high quality and relevant education for young people aged 5-11 who have Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) identified their primary area of need in their EHCP. This focuses on individual, personal and academic achievement-setting high expectations for all.

As a school we are also committed to celebrating all achievements and providing a wide range of rich, meaningful and varied opportunities- preparing our pupils well for their next steps. We aim to foster a love of learning, regardless of need, developing independence through inclusive and accessible learning.

Cury School is a maintained special school for children aged 5 – 11 years. There are currently 18 pupils/students on role (January 2026). Cury School is a specialist provision for pupils of primary school age, who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and have Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) identified as a primary need.

### **Our Trust**

Cury School is part of the Special Partnership Trust, an ambitious and inspiring collaboration of specialist provision in Cornwall, with a focus on excellence in learning for everyone. We are committed to ensure that every child, irrespective of need or location gets the best learning opportunities possible. We believe in providing challenge and support in equal measure to our pupils, nurturing the talents and skills of all learners.

### **Commitment to attendance**

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence

- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families so pupils have the support in place to attend school.

At Cury School we recognise that evidence shows that securing excellent attendance at school is key to ensure positive outcomes for our young people. We have the highest expectations for all our students. Poor attendance leaves students vulnerable to falling behind, creating gaps in their learning, and diminishing their self-confidence.

#### **The Leaders of the school:**

- have high expectations for every pupil's attendance at school
- communicate these expectations clearly, strongly and consistently to parents and to pupils
- set expectations about attendance from the outset – from Nursery onwards
- explain to parents and pupils why good attendance is important and how it helps pupils to achieve and make progress
- listen to parents carefully to find out why their children are not meeting statutory requirements so that they can act accordingly
- challenge parents who do not make sure that their children attend, but also offer support where needed
- have the right people in place to have these conversations with parents
- ensure that attendance is always recorded accurately
- systematically analyse attendance information so that they can see patterns and trends
- use this analysis to target their actions, both for individuals and at a whole-school level
- make sure that attendance is 'everyone's business' in school
- understand that good attendance does not happen in isolation – there is an interrelationship between attendance and the quality of the school's curriculum, ethos, behaviour and inclusivity
- have high expectations and will look at whole-school improvement once attendance reaches the national average and continue to strive to reach above national average attendance
- see the process of securing good attendance for all pupils as an ongoing process, never something that is 'finished'

## **2. Legislation and guidance**

Regular and punctual attendance of students at school is, under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school. This strategy meets the requirements of the updated Working Together to Improve School Attendance which became statutory in August 2024 from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

#### **The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

**Link Governor for attendance: Alison Bone**

#### **The Headteacher: Ruth Carpenter**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Making referrals to the Education Welfare Officer as required.

#### **The designated senior leader responsible for attendance: Ruth Carpenter and Richard Triggs**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Ruth Carpenter and can be contacted via 01736 365039, or Richard Triggs on 01326 771192

## **The attendance officer: Natalie Woods**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Maintaining effective systems for tackling absence
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7) to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the head teacher
- Working with external agencies including education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Senior Leadership Team when pupil absence crosses thresholds that require action (eg. Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices)
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

The attendance officer can be contacted via 01326 771192

## **Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for taking the class register twice a day and submitting this information to the school office. The register is taken electronically using the MIS. Class teachers positively promote good attendance and alert Senior Leadership Team to any concerns they have or any patterns they notice in regard to attendance.

## **All staff**

To promote excellent attendance by pupils and provide opportunities to celebrate good attendance. To raise concerns with the Attendance Officer where necessary.

## **School admin staff**

Designated admin staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record any explanations provided on the school system.

Any unexplained absences are promptly followed up by the attendance officer with an electronic message or telephone call home to the parents/carers to ascertain the reason for the non-attendance.

## **Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence unless a doctor's note has been provided), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with at least two emergency contact numbers for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

## **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time.

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **Attendance register**

The school's admission register and daily attendance registers are kept in accordance with the [School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

The register is an accurate reflection of a pupil's attendance and a legal document which may be used as evidence in court. The decision on whether to authorise an absence rests with the headteacher. A staff member takes the attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion they record whether each registered pupil is physically present in school or, if not, the reason they are not in school by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance Regulations 2024.

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

The office staff will make notes on the register with details of the reason for the absence.

The register will mark whether a pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive at school by 9:00am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9:10am and will be kept open until 9:30am. Children arriving between 9:30am and 9:45am will be classed as late, which will be a code L. Children arriving after 9:45am will be registered as unauthorised absence for the whole session which will be a code U. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 1:00pm and will be kept open until 1.15pm.

### **Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day and each subsequent day of an unplanned absence by 9:00am, or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff (see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

### **Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Medical evidence may be required to authorise further absences linked to illness.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

### **Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the code L.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the code U, which is classed as an unauthorised absence for the whole session which can be liable for a fine under statutory guidelines.

Any repeated lateness will result in a discussion with the Family Liaison in the first instance in order to support. The designated leader for attendance may request a meeting if punctuality continues to be an issue.

### **Following up unexplained absence**

Where any pupil that we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of the unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact external services such as Social Care and/or the Police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer every day that the absence continues without explanation, to ensure proper safeguarding actions are taken if/where necessary. If the absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Home Visits for Unexplained Absences - Home visits help to identify and address barriers to school attendance, such as transportation, medical needs, or other challenges. In cases where a student is absent without a valid reason, the school will conduct home visits as part of our attendance monitoring procedures. If a student is absent and we are unable to contact parents, or any of the emergency contacts on the first day of absence, a home visit will be carried out that same day to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing. For students experiencing prolonged unexplained absences, weekly home visits will be conducted to sight the child and offer support to re-engage them in school. Additionally, the school will maintain a list of vulnerable students for whom a day-one home visit will always be undertaken if there are significant concerns about their welfare. These measures are in place to safeguard students and to promote consistent school attendance.

## Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via half-termly written reports. Where there are immediate concerns the parents/ carers will be informed verbally in the first instance, before receiving a letter addressing concerns.

## 5. Authorised and Unauthorised absence

### Approval for term-time absence

The Government has made it clear that children should not be taken out of school, unless the school agrees it is justified under 'exceptional circumstances.' The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

No absence for holiday can be authorised. Any absence required for exceptional circumstance will always be considered by the Headteacher, but the definition of an 'exceptional circumstance' is very tight and most requests that we receive do not fall into the government's 'exceptional circumstance' category.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least six weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents or carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart, and we would only authorise the absence if the parent or carer isn't expected to work on the day of the absence.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

### Legal sanctions

There is a National Framework for issuing penalty notices that reflects changes to the law introduced through the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.

Where a child is absent from school without authorisation, the parent(s) will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. Schools must consider on a case-by-case basis whether to ask the local authority to issue a penalty notice to a parent when their child's absence is recorded as unauthorised after 10 school sessions within any 10-school week period. This will typically equate to 5 days of unauthorised absence from school. A school week is a week in which the school meets at least once.

Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Within the law there is an escalation process for repeat cases where any second attendance related penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the first is charged at a flat rate of £160. A third penalty notice cannot be issued within 3 years of the first, and prosecution or other attendance intervention should be considered instead.

Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial

sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court. Schools will collaborate with the Education Welfare Officer who will oversee this process on behalf of school.

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days.

If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, you will be committing a further offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days.

Importantly, fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may also result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Absence not authorised by the school may also result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Again, Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Money raised from fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

## **6. Strategies for promoting attendance**

As a Special School for students who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and have Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) identified as a primary need, Cury School recognises that the students and their families may not have full autonomy over their attendance. Therefore, attendance rewards and sanctions for individual students are not appropriate. The following strategies are employed at Cury School:

- we have high expectations for every pupil's attendance at school
- we have a team that is passionate about high expectations for all learners
- we provide a varied and engaging curriculum so that all students enjoy being at school
- we give students a purpose to be in school each day
- we provide a safe and welcoming environment for all in the school community
- we make sure students know who they can communicate with if they have any worries or concerns

- we communicate expectations clearly, strongly and consistently to parents and to pupils
- we set expectations about attendance from the outset – from EYFS transition onwards
- we explain to parents and pupils why good attendance is important and how it helps pupils to achieve
- we listen to parents carefully to find out why their children are not attending well enough so that we can act accordingly. We provide ongoing support from our Home School Liaison
- we challenge parents who do not make sure that their children attend, but also offer support where needed
- we have the right people in place to have these conversations with parents
- we ensure that attendance is always recorded accurately
- we systematically analyse attendance information so that we can see patterns and trends
- we use this analysis to target actions, both for individuals and at a whole-school level
- we make sure that attendance is ‘everyone’s business’ in school
- we engage in, and welcome, further reading, resources, research and ‘good ideas’ about continually improving attendance.

## **7. Attendance monitoring**

### **Monitoring attendance**

Cury school will:

Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level

- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Discuss attendance concerns as part of regular Safeguarding team meetings.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE’s school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

### **Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### **Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

### **Reporting Absences to the Local Authority**

In line with statutory requirements, the school will report any student who accumulates 10 or more unauthorised absences to the Local Authority for further action and support. This may include issuing a penalty notice or initiating additional interventions to address attendance concerns. Additionally, when a

student's sickness absence totals 15 days or more (consecutive or cumulative) within a school year, the case will also be reported to the Local Authority. This enables appropriate monitoring and ensures that the student is receiving any necessary health or educational support to facilitate their return to school.

## **Reducing persistent and severe absence**

According to the Department for Education (DfE) guidance, a student is classified as persistently absent when their attendance falls below 90%. The school closely monitors attendance data to identify students at risk of becoming persistently absent and will intervene early to provide support to the student and their family. This may include meetings with parents or carers, attendance improvement plans, referrals to external agencies, or targeted pastoral support. Our aim is to work collaboratively with families to remove barriers to attendance and ensure every student has consistent access to education and learning opportunities.

Letters will be sent out regularly to parents/carers of children whose attendance is a concern.

For those parents/carers of persistent absentees, or children who are at risk of persistent absence a letter will be sent home giving them a visual comparison between their child and their peers to help them understand the impact of the absence.

A pupil will be classified as severe absence when their attendance falls below 50%.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Pupils will have an Individual Attendance Improvement Plan if attendance falls below 75%. This will document the strategies that have been put in place to support a pupil and the milestones to success.

## **Attendance Steps at Cury School**

### **› Step 1: All pupils**

- Monitoring of attendance statistics weekly through our Cury School attendance spreadsheet.
- Persistent absences/low attendance marks will be monitored whilst considering illness and individual circumstances.
- Attendance promoting strategies are applied.

### **› Step 2: Pupils who are at risk from persistent absence**

- Family liaison officer will make a welfare call/check if appropriate or conduct an informal check in with parents/carers.
- Attendance officer to support with reasons for absence.
- Reminder of attendance expectations.

### **› Step 3: Persistent absentees**

- First stage letter inviting parents/carers in for an attendance review meeting with HT and attendance lead.
- Actions will be agreed during the meeting for steps to improve attendance.
- Multi-agency approach and targeted interventions.

### **› Step 4: Review and monitor**

- Two further attendance review meetings to monitor family situation and attendance statistics.
- Supportive, solution-focused approach throughout.

- Further review meetings can be put in place at the attendance team's discretion depending on individual situation.

➤ **Step 5: Persistent absence where targeted intervention has been unsuccessful**

- If attendance has not improved following review meetings then the attendance lead will liaise with the EWO.
- If advised, a meeting with HT, attendance lead and EWO will be called with parents/guardians to discuss next steps.
- EWO intervention/local authority statutory intervention.

### **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This strategy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum this will be completed annually by Ruth Carpenter and Richard Triggs who are the Designated Senior Leaders with responsibility for Attendance. At every review, the strategy will be approved by the full governing board.

### **9. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Special Partnership Trust Attendance Policy

## Appendix 1: Attendance codes

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

### Attendance codes currently in use

Code	Full name	Description
The student is counted as present.		
/ or \	Present am or pm	Present in school during registration.
L	Late	Late arrival before the register has closed
The student is counted as present, at an Approved Educational Activity.		
B	Educated off Site	The student is at an off-site supervised educational activity approved by the school.
K	Education provision provided by LA	Education provision arranged by a local authority, rather than the school
P	Sporting Activity (Approved)	Pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
V	Educational trip	A residential trip organised by the school or a supervised strictly educational trip arranged by an approved organisation.
W	Work Experience	A student in the final two years of compulsory education is attending work experience.
The student is counted as absent, authorised.		
C	Other Authorised Absence	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
C1	Other Authorised Absence	Absence for a regulated performance or employment abroad
C2	Other Authorised Absence	Pupils on part-time timetables
J1	Interview	Leave of absence to attend an interview for employment or admission into another educational institution

E	Excluded	If a student is excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked E, for up to the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period (referred to as 'suspensions' by the DfE from Autumn 2021) or permanent exclusion.
M	Medical/Dental Appointments	The student is absent due to a medical or dental appointment that could not be made outside of school hours.
R	Religious Observance	The student is absent for religious observance on a day designated by the religious body.
S	Study Leave	Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils for public exams. Students should still be able to come into school to revise.
T	Traveller Absence	Used when Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) or New Travellers are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school.
I	Illness	This Illness code can be used for any form of illness, if you don't want to distinguish Covid-19 illness.

The student is counted as absent, unauthorised.

G	Family Holiday (Not Agreed)	The Holiday was not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the headteacher.
N	No Reason	The reason for the absence has not been provided. If no reason for an absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time, it should be changed to O.
O	Unauthorised Absence	If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.
U	Late (After Register Closes)	Schools should keep registers open for a reasonable amount of time, after which the student should be marked with a U.

These codes are not counted so will not affect attendance figures.

D	Dual Registration	The student is registered at another school and attends it during this lesson e.g. students at a pupil referral unit. Schools should only record attendance and absences for sessions the pupil is scheduled to attend at their school.
X	Non-statutory school age absence	Sessions non-compulsory school-age children are not expected to attend. This code should only be used for early years students who have not yet passed the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday.
Y1	Unable to attend	Absence due to transport normally provided not being available.
Y2	Unable to attend	Widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend	Part of school closed.
Y4	Unable to attend	Unexpected whole school closure (different from # for planned closures).
Y5	Unable to attend	Pupils in the criminal justice system.
Y6	Unable to attend	Absence due to public health guidance or law.
Y7	Unable to attend	Any other unavoidable cause.
Z	Pupil Not On Roll	This code can be used when setting up registers in advance of pupils joining. Schools must take attendance for pupils from the first day the student should be attending the school.
#	School Closed To Pupils	This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as if the school is used as a polling station.

## Appendix 2: Graphic illustrating attendance data in terms of days and percentages

There are 175 non-school days in a year and 190 school days each year.					
190 school days in each year					
190 days for your child's education	7 days absence				
	183 days in school	10 days absence			
	180 days in school	19 days absence			
		171 days in school and the equivalent of a month not in school that year	28 days absence		
		162 days in school If it is 85% each year, your child is missing the equivalent of a year of education over their time at junior school	47 days absence		
143 days in school					
<b>100%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>75%</b>
Good Best chance of success Gets your child off to a flying start Helps their confidence, social development as well as their academic progress Over 97% is considered excellent attendance	Some concern Harder for your child to make progress School starts tracking your child's attendance closely Medical evidence may be required to authorise further absences linked to illness		Worrying Your child is now classified as 'persistently absent' Education Welfare Service involvement is likely		Serious concern Having a significant impact on your child's education and well-being Legal action may be taken At 50% your child is classified as 'severely absent'

### Appendix 3: Leave of absence request form



**PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE  
IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES  
Request form**

***Parents/Carers***

***Please read these guidance notes prior to completing the form below which needs to be returned to the Headteacher***

*Holidays during school time (Guidance from the Department of Education)*

#### **IMPORTANT CHANGES TO THE LAW REGARDING PENALTY NOTICES FOR UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL**

The Department of Education have released guidance following changes to the law which came into effect from 19th August 2024 and will affect when penalty notices are issued in Cornwall. From the start of this academic year 2024/25 a new National Framework for Penalty Notices (fines) for school absence, including unauthorised holiday absence, is being introduced following changes to the law.

At Cury School, we understand that there are times when it may be necessary for a student to be absent from school, such as when they are genuinely unwell. In these instances, it is appropriate to authorise the absence. However, the Government has made it clear that children should not be taken out of school for other reasons unless the school agrees it is justified under 'exceptional circumstances.'

**No absence for holiday can be authorised.** Any absence required for exceptional circumstance will always be considered by the Headteacher, but the definition of an 'exceptional circumstance' is very tight and most requests that we receive do not fall into the government's 'exceptional circumstance' category.

Penalty fines are issued to each parent, not jointly. Therefore, each parent would receive a penalty fine of £80 if a child was to accrue 10 unauthorised sessions from school. Below are some examples of how 10 unauthorised absence sessions could occur:

- 5 days of school missed due to holiday.
- 3 days missed for a holiday and 2 days where absence is not reported to school.
- 10 days of unauthorised lateness to school.

We have been asked to communicate the information below from the government:

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days.

If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, you will be committing a further offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days.

Importantly, fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may also result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Absence not authorised by the school may also result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Again, Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Money raised from fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

Within our Special Partnership Trust we believe for children/students to learn most effectively, it is essential that they attend on a regular basis, and the role of the school is to ensure that this occurs. Regular attendance is extremely important if your child is to make progress and we need to work together to ensure this happens.

To address this, our Special Partnership Trust has developed a protocol via a 'Pupil Leave of Absence' request form (in exceptional circumstances) in how it addresses family holidays requested to be taken in school time. Families will be able to access this form via the school's office and asked to send it back to the Headteacher of the school; when completing this form, the school asks parents/carers to give some thought to the 'exceptional circumstances' that they feel make it necessary for their child to be taken out of school during term time.

The school acknowledges that and in accordance with DEF guidance Children in Care should not be taken out of school for holidays; any request made by the carers responsible for the child will be discussed with the allocated social worker. The Social worker will advise the school on the outcome agreed.

Our Special Partnership Trust needs to make parents/carers aware that, if the Headteacher **does not** authorise the requested leave of absence and parents continue to remove their child on the requested dates, the school is legally required to notify the Local Authority who can potentially impose a penalty notice. If the Headteacher has not authorised the requested leave, parents will be notified that their child has been recorded in the electronic register as an unauthorised absence.

If the school agrees to the exceptional circumstances outlined, parents will be notified of the permitted authorised absence via the school office. The school will make a record of all exceptional circumstances requests made retaining such information in the child's educational record; the register will be recorded using the code C.

If you require any further information, please contact the school office in the first instance.

<b>Policy approved by the Trustees of the Special Partnership Trust</b>	September 2025
<b>Policy to be reviewed</b>	Every 2 years
<b>Responsibility</b>	CEO/Headteacher

## PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE - IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES - Request form

**Parents/Carers - Please return this request form to the Headteacher**

If you consider an absence during term time to be an exceptional circumstance, please complete this form and return it to the school office at least 15 school days before the date you wish to remove your child from school.

SCHOOL:		
NAME OF PUPIL:		CLASS:
		TEACHER:
DATES REQUESTED – <b>FROM</b> (Insert first date of absence):		
DATES REQUESTED – <b>TO</b> (Insert last date of absence):		
TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOL DAYS:		
I request leave of absence for the above-named child due to the following exceptional circumstance(s):-		
I/ we agree to the terms and conditions outlined within the Exceptional Circumstances policy of the Special Partnership Trust	Signed (Parent/carer):	
I understand that if the absence request is unauthorised the school may request that Cornwall Council issue a Penalty Notice. I understand that a Penalty Notice is issued to each liable parent/carer of each child taken out of school and that this carries a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid within 28 days (or £160 with no option to pay the lower amount if it is the 2nd penalty notice within a rolling 3-year period). I understand that if I do not pay the fine, it may result in legal	Signed (Parent/carer):	

action being taken against me. I understand that parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) and Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES - Request form

To the parents/carers of:	
Request approved/not approved for your child to have a leave of absence (exceptional circumstances):	<b>APPROVED</b>  <b>NOT APPROVED</b>
If exceptional circumstances have been declined (reasons) – <i>if you would like an appointment to discuss any aspect please telephone the office manager to request an appointment with the HT:</i>	
FROM (first day of absence):	
TO (last day of absence):	
Request/destination:	
Head Teacher's signature:	
Date:	

<i>Letter sent / Phone Call / other</i>	<i>Signed:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
<i>PN Request</i>	<i>Signed:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
<i>Copy in school file</i>	<i>Signed:</i>	<i>Date:</i>